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THE OBSERVATOR.

Of the Obedience due to Soveraigns. Harry Clitus *on the Stool of Repentance. Of a Soldiers being Stricken Blind in the Tower of* London.

From Saturday October the 23d, to Wednesday October the 27th, 1703.

Country-m. SInce this new buſtle about *Paſſive-Obedience* and *Non-Reſiſtance*, I have often had it in my Mind to ask you What is the Duty which we owe to our Soveraigns? I Proteſt, by the Diſputes of my Times, I can't tell what the Duty of a Subject is. One ſort of People will Pay no Duty at all; and Another ſort in their *Obedience*, Bow themſelves below the Dignity of *Brute Beaſts*. Now, Pray, Sir, let us know what is the *Right* and *Reaſon* of the Thing.

Obſ. I muſt ſuppoſe you to mean, what is the Duty of a Subject of *England*; otherwiſe I cannot give you an apt and pertinent Anſwer: For as the *Laws* and *Conſtitutions* of Countries differ, ſo does the *Obedience* of the People to the Supreme Magiſtrate. The Commands of *Obedience* in *Scripture*, are laid down in General Terms, and therefore do Oblige the Subjects of all Governments. We ought to be Subject to the *Supreme Magiſtrate*, becauſe *He is the Miniſter of God to us for Good*, as we find in the 13*th* of *Romans*: So that while they Miniſter for *Good*, our *Allegiance* is indiſpenſibly due to them; but when they Miniſter for *Evil*, they are no longer Magiſtrates, becauſe they are Ordain'd of God, who cannot be the Author of *Evil*. Now, as long as they Govern according to the *Laws* and *Conſtitutions* of the Countries, over which they Preſide, as long as they *are not a Terror to Good Works, but to the Evil*; ſo long is your *Obedience* due. And nothing but the Preſervation of your Antient *Rights* and *Properties*, the *Laws* and *Liberties* of your Country, and your *Holy Religion*, can juſtify you in the withdrawing your *Allegiance* from your Lawful Soveraigns.

It is good for every Man to Underſtand therefore his Native *Rights* and *Properties*, and the *Conſtitution* and *Laws* of the *Realm*, and that on a twofold Account.

1. That they may know what their juſt *Rights* are, which have immemorially been the *Birth-Rights* of their Anceſtors, and their own Patrimony. It is impoſſible for Men to put a Price to the full Value of the Commodity, if they know not the *Nature* and the *Intrinſick* worth thereof. No Nation under the Copes of Heaven has a People Bleſſed with more Valuable *Priviledges*, than have *Engliſhmen*: They have ſuch *Laws* and *Immunities*, that their Anceſtors have ventur'd Life and Limb to preſerve; and have Tranſmitted them to Poſterity, written in their own *Blood*; and yet, to the Shame of many *Engliſhmen*, they are hardly known by them. And how can we expect that Men Ignorant of their own *Rights*, ſhould ever take Care to defend them for the ſake of Poſterity.

In the Second Place, we ought to Underſtand our *Rights* and *Properties*, and the *Laws* and *Conſtitutions* of our Country, that we may the better know how to Pay *Obedience* to our Soveraigns, who are the Guardians of thoſe *Liberties*, and have the *Executive Power* of thoſe Laws: For how can any Man know the Duty he Owes to his Soveraign, if he does not Underſtand his own *Rights* and *Properties*? Thus he Pays a Blind *Obedience*, which is acceptable neither to *God* nor *Man*. I can at any time prove, That the *Engliſh Conſtitution* is the beſt Regulated Form of Government in the World; and that no Monarch can be ſo Great and Glorious as an *Engliſh* King: And this from the Excellency of the Laws which he Adminiſters, and from the Tranſcendent *Freedoms* and *Immunities* of the People he Governs. His Hands are Ty'd up from doing *Wrong*, which ſtill keeps Him within the Bounds of *Reaſon*. He Governs *Freemen* and not *Slaves*, which makes Him a *King* of *Men*, and not of *Aſſes*: He is Bound from Nothing but what would *Un-King*, and *Un-Man* Himſelf, and make Him a *Tyrant*, and an *Enemy* to *God* and *Man*.

Now if the *Liberties* of *Engliſhmen* be ſo Great, and the *Prerogatives* of the Crown ſo Tranſcendent; if the One exceeds the *Priviledges* of other Subjects, and the other be the moſt Glorious of *Crown'd Heads*; as the latter is worthy of double *Honour*, ſo the former ought to Pay double *Obedience*. *Engliſhmen* can never put too great a Value on a Good *King* or *Queen*; they ſufficiently know the want of ſo great a Bleſſing. And when ſuch Signal Favours are miſ-improv'd, it may juſtly Provoke *God*, either to debar, or take away the Bleſſing. We have known in our Time, That *God* has given us One *King* in his *Wrath*, and has taken away Another in His Sore Diſpleaſure, from a *Murmuring, Sinful Nation*: He has try'd us once more in giving us a Good *Queen*, to whom we owe the Higheſt *Duty*, *Reſpect*, and *Obedience*; and if we do not improve this Repeated *Mercy*, who knows whether ever the *Almighty* will try us once again for the future? Let us Love our *Queen*, and Pray for Her Succeſs, and that *Evil Counſellors* may be remov'd far from Her; and let us not lay any *Miſmanagements* in *Government* at the Door of the Crown, but charge them to the Account of thoſe People, who are the Authors of them; and this is the way for us to be a Happy and Peaceful Nation. —— Prithee, What good News haſt thou got from our *Queens* Allies?

Country-m. Only a Confirmation of the good News we received by the laſt *Poſt*. And inſtead of better Divertiſement, I have here brought you *Harry Clitus* upon the *Stool of Repentance*: He now looks like his Picture on the Frontiſpiece of his Paper. Pray, What is the meaning of theſe *Latin* Words about the Picture?

Obſ. Rideo, quia Vinco: I Laugh, becauſe I overcome.

Coountry-m. Poor Creature, he has overcome very finely, he ſounded a *Triumph* before the Battel was over. He and his Club have Laugh'd till their Sides ake; one of 'em has got an *Aſthma*, and is gone into the Country for his Health, and the reſt are Troubled with the *Ptiſick*. I would have 'em go to *Ben. Harris*, and Buy ſome of his *Syrupus Balſamicus*, which is excellent good againſt thoſe Diſtempers. I am ſure our Friend *Ben.* will Uſe them kindly; for 'tis pity ſuch Eminent Perſons ſhould Cough out their Guts, after they have Laugh'd away their Underſtandings.

Obſ.

Obſ. Prithee, what is the meaning of all this?

Country-m. Why you muſt underſtand that the Magiſtrate, *Harry Clitus* abuſed t'other day, which you took Notice of, has taken Notice of *Harry*'s Impudence, and *Harry* pretends he meant *No Body*, nor *Nothing* by what he ſaid; and now he looks with as Cloudy a Countenance, as he pretended that Honourable Magiſtrate did in the Court of *Juſtice*, tho' he cannot Erect it to half ſo much Purpoſe. However, *Harry* is ſtill very *Impudent*, and will not acknowledge himſelf in an Error; yet he's a true Saint of the Order of *Tantivy*, he's for *Paſſive-Obedience* and *Non-Reſiſtance*, and will Beg Pardon *Right or Wrong*, if that will ſave his Bacon.

Obſ. Truly, Honeſt *Country-man*, if that Honourable Magiſtrate out of his Goodneſs ſhould paſs by an Affront of this Nature, he may in a ſhort time ſee that Proverb made good, *Save a Thief from the Gallows, and he will Cut your Throat.* For 'tis Ten to One, but *Harry*, in Requital of his Kindneſs, will expoſe him on the Stage in the next *Prologue* he Writes for the *Players*. As that Worſhipful Perſon is a Gentleman, I know not how far his Honour may Oblige him to Grant a Pardon to One that ſhall beg it, in more Modeſt Terms, than *Harry Clitus* has done; but as he is a Magiſtrate, in his *Politick Capacity*, and as the Affront was given on the Account of the Execution of his Office in a Court of *Juſtice*, I don't ſee how far it may ſuit with the Honour of our *Laws*. For our Courts of Juſtice muſt be kept Sacred; and 'tis one of the chief Bleſſings of the *Revolution*, that we have *Judges* as at Firſt, and *Councellors* as at the Beginning. We will at any time allow a *Plea* againſt the Extrajudicial Proceedings of a Court of *Juſtice*; tho' at the ſame time we will not allow the Judges of the Court to be Calumniated. Magiſtrates are to be Oppoſed by *Dint* of *Law* and *Argument*, and not by the force of *Calumny* and *Aſperſion*. And as I told you before, every *Citizen*, a *Freeman* of that Honourable City, is obliged to take Notice hereof, and concerned to keep up the Reputation of their Magiſtrates, all which are choſen by themſelves; and their Choice is Upbraided in the Affronts that are put upon their Prime Magiſtrates: Beſides, they may Remember that this very Party made their Firſt Approaches againſt the *City Rights*, after this manner: They firſt made the Magiſtracy of the *City*, and the Perſons of the Magiſtrates; Ridiculous by *Lampoons* and *Libells*, and then they Storm'd the *Charter*, and Raviſh'd from them the Antient *Rights* and *Immunities* of their Anceſtors.

Country-m. I think he has finely aſpers'd you in this Paper; I am afraid the Fellow is but ſhort Liv'd, his Gall is broken.

Obſ. He had as good Talk to a Poſt as to Me; I take no more Notice of his *Jargon*, than of the Whiſtling of the Wind. He may well belie me, when he has the *Impudence* to belie ſo Eminent a Magiſtrate, as the Worſhipful Perſon we have been juſt now Speaking of. But I think he is very Saucy in ſaying that I venture my Neck, in Writing in Defence of our *Laws*, in Juſtification of the *Rights* and *Honour* of our *Parliaments*; and of Her Majeſties *Right* to the *Crown*; eſpecially under the Government of the Beſt of *Queens*. Has't got nothing more?

Country-m. Truly, Sir, I have a very ſad Story to Relate, which led me to the *Tower* of *London* for the Confirmation thereof: A new Liſted *Soldier* on *Thurſday* laſt, Stole two Rolls of Bread from the *Sutler* in the *Tower*, which one of his *Comrades* ſaw; and the Perſon which Stole the *Bread*, being Taxed therewith, among many other Imprecations Wiſh'd he might never ſee *Bread* more if he took it: But upon Search the *Bread* was found Hid under his *Bed*, and he acknowledg'd the Fact, and the next Day he was taken Blind. I ſaw the Man, and the Sight of his Eye ſeemed, to a common *Spectator*, to be Good, but had no Motion after any Object, nor ſo much as Turn'd when any thing was Shaken before his Face. He acknowledged himſelf to be Stark Blind, and own'd it a Judgment of *God* upon him for his *Raſh Wiſh*, and ſeem'd very *Penitent*: I tell you this of my own Knowledge.

Obſ. Well will it be for this poor *Wretch*, if by this Singular Judgment of *God* on his *Body*, his *Mind* be *Enlightned* to a *Repentance* unto *Eternal Salvation*. Thoſe Fools who make a Mock of *Sin*, little conſider how diſmal their Condition would be, if God ſhould Take them, as this poor Fellow, at their Words, and Grant them their *Wiſhes*. How often doe thoſe *Execrable Wretches* Pray to *God* to *Damn* them *Body* and *Soul*, when *God* might as well Anſwer their *Prayers*, as the *Wiſh* of this poor *Sinner*? But for *Good* and *Gracious Ends*, beſt known to himſelf, He withholds His *Judgments*, and ſuffers them to proceed in a *Rotation* of *Iniquities*. And ſuch Inſtances as theſe are the Effects Gods Goodneſs, as they are Warnings to others. I wiſh every Senſleſs *Sinner* in *London* and *Weſtminſter*, whoſe common *Prayer* to God is to *Damn his Soul and Body*, would, like you, Repair to the *Tower of London*, and there behold this *Living Monument* of Gods *Judgment*. By this Mans *Blindneſs* their Eyes might be opened to ſee the *Precipice* on which they ſtand; and that every ſuch Wicked Wiſh of theirs, does Entitle them to that *Damnation* they ſo earneſtly Pray for, and which all Good Men ſo earneſtly Pray to be Delivered from.

Thoſe *Parents* who have been ſo Fooliſh as to carry their Children to ſee *Plays* and *Interludes*, and other the *Pomps* and *Vanities* of this Wicked World, which they have Renounced in their *Baptiſmal Vow* and *Covenant* with God, would do well to ſhew them this Sight of Gods *Judgment*. It would make a greater Impreſſion on their Minds, than Many *Precepts* and *Diſcourſes* of the Terror of Gods *Judgements*: For the Puniſhments, Denounced in the Scriptures againſt Sinners, being Inviſible and future, are leſs heeded by Unthinking Perſons; but here the Judgement is Viſible, and will make an Awful Impreſſion on the Memories of Young Ones, and they may hereby relate this Judgement of God to ſucceeding Generations. And I hope the Miniſters of Chriſt in this City will not be Negligent in Viſiting this poor Wretch, and in Counſelling him how to Improve this great and ſignal *Judgment* for the good of his Soul, and in Teaching him how to run in the Path of Gods *Commandments*; which he may do without the help of his Bodily Eyes.

Advertiſement.

THE next Preſentation of two Livings, One a *Parſonage* of 200*l. per Annum*: The Other a *Vicarage* of Six Score Pounds *per Annum*, Within a Days Journey of *London*, Is to be Sold at a Reaſonable Rate. Enquire at the Printer of this Paper.

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